

The Monthly Minute

with State Senator John Pappageorge

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What algae can do for Michigan

Dear Friend:

In the past I have shared proposals that are designed to help the environment through recycling, reducing pollution, and increasing the use of renewable energy. I would like to tell you now about a new process that offers tremendous possibilities to our state. It has to do with using algae as an alternative energy source.



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Currently, local waste treatment facilities treat waste water with chlorine to kill the bacteria. Once treated, the water is dumped back into the river. If we instead purify this water with ultraviolet light to kill the same bacteria, it is clean enough to host algae. It takes three things to grow algae: light, air and water.

Introducing CO₂ into the process in a controlled environment facilitates the growth of algae. Algae actually breaks down the CO₂ during the growth process, preventing it from entering the atmosphere in the first place. This turns a liability, CO₂, into an asset. Eighteen million tons of CO₂ introduced in the facility can produce five million tons of algae. This algae can then be converted into 85 million gallons of biodeisel, 134 million gallons of ethanol, or 3.5 million tons of feed stock, fertilizer or fuel stock. The possible byproducts are endless.

The potential here is enormous. The 100 largest CO₂ emitters alone produce 1.5 billion tons of CO₂. Converting this much CO₂ could supply up to 20% of our current fuel production. It will also bring much needed jobs to Michigan. A single facility can employ 2,400 people.

Michigan State University and an upstart company called Sequest are in discussions to partner together to create a new world-class algae research facility on MSU's campus. This has the potential to do for energy what Henry Ford did for the automobile.

I see enormous potential with algae and I feel the state would do well in supporting this endeavor. I will keep you abreast of progress on this project.

Sincerely,

John Pappageorge



Senate takes action on health care bills

The Senate passed legislation recently that ensures access for a quarter of a million Michigan residents to affordable coverage in the individual health care market.

The Senate adopted substitutes for House Bills 5282 and 5283 that will increase consumer protections by making it harder to raise rates when people get sick, level the playing field in the individual health care market and shorten the approval timeline for insurance rate applications.

The Senate amendments resulted from nine public meetings of the Senate Health Policy Committee. The panel heard

countless hours of testimony from outside experts and interested parties on the pros and cons of legislation passed by the House of Representatives.

Throughout the process, the Senate supported a deliberative review of the issue and crafted a plan that looks out for the best interests of Michigan residents.

The Senate versions include:

- ◆ Increasing consumer protections;
- ◆ Preserving the oversight roles of the attorney general and the Office of Financial and Insurance Regulation (OFIR);
- ◆ Requiring OFIR to do a one-year feasibility study of the creation of a high-risk pool; and
- ◆ Clarifying the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan (BCBSM) mission.
- ◆ Requiring BCBSM to submit an annual report on meeting of its social obligations.
- ◆ Creating two new members on the BCBSM board, appointed by the Senate majority leader and House speaker.

The measures head back to the House for consideration.

Panel to study the impact of the new Michigan Business Tax

The Senate recently formed a panel charged with soliciting and analyzing input from taxpayers on the impact of the new Michigan Business Tax (MBT). The committee will make recommendations in early June on how to make the new tax fairer and more equitable.

The bipartisan MBT Impact Assessment Subcommittee was created in response to several small and medium-sized businesses telling the Senate Finance Committee about the devastating effects of the new business tax on their ability to stay in business.

"I have heard from numerous business owners in the district who are struggling under the new tax," Pappageorge said. "These hearings will seek out and address any unintended consequences of the MBT."

The panel recently announced hearings in four cities across the state to learn from Michigan businesses about the MBT's impact and to gather suggestions for making improvement.

Business owners are encouraged to attend the hearings, which are being held at the following places and times:

- ◆ **Davenport University**
Grand Rapids
May 8 at 3 p.m.
- ◆ **Oakland University**
Rochester
May 15 at 3 p.m.
- ◆ **Saginaw Valley State University**
Saginaw
May 16 at 1:30 p.m.
- ◆ **University Center at Gaylord**
Gaylord
May 19 at 3 p.m.

Local happenings with Senator Pappageorge

April 8th- Troy Turnaround Achievement Awards

Sen. Pappageorge's District Representative, Corinne Khederian, presented Certificates of Achievement to outstanding Troy middle and high school students who were selected by their teachers, principals and counselors for the remarkable "turnaround" they achieved academically and personally at their respective Troy schools. The youth expressed gratitude to their teachers, family and community for the recognition they received.



April 19th – Pappageorge's 2nd Annual Royal Oak Park Pick-Up

Sen. Pappageorge and his staff took part in the City of Royal Oak's Annual Adopt-a-Park program on Saturday, April 19th. Aiding in this community effort were citizens from the area who did everything from raking leaves to picking up garbage at Wagner Park. It was a great way to celebrate Earth Day and create a cleaner, more friendly environment. Thank you to everyone who participated in this program!

April 19th – Birmingham Lions Club Celebrates their 80th Anniversary

Corinne Khederian, on behalf of Sen. Pappageorge, presented Club President, Donna Zimmer, and the Lions Club members a tribute honoring the Club's 80th Anniversary and all the outstanding community service achievements made to the greater Birmingham community.



April 26th – Clawson YWCA Auction



Corinne Khederian attended the YWCA 13th Annual Benefit Auction on behalf of Sen. Pappageorge along with Clawson community members, friends, guests and staff. The event, chaired by Margaret Monroe, featured a silent and live auction along with dinner and attracted many supporters who made generous bids on items to help continue the wonderful programs the Clawson YWCA offers to the community.

April 28th – Madison Heights High School

Sen. Pappageorge spoke with Madison High School students on his work in Lansing and the legislative process. He also detailed his alternative energy proposal before the Senate and his concern for the rising fuel costs and future energy problems for the next generation. During the question and answer session, students asked questions ranging from the senator's prior job experiences to what is the most rewarding part about being a senator.



Upcoming Events

♦ May 18: Celebrate Birmingham Parade “75th Anniversary Celebration”

Sen. Pappageorge, along with his supporters, will be joining in the Birmingham festivities to kick-off the summer events. The parade begins at 1:00 p.m. in downtown Birmingham. Click [here](#) or contact the city of Birmingham for more information.

♦ May 22: 14th Annual Senate Memorial Day Service

Sen. Pappageorge invites you to be his guest at the 14th Annual Senate Memorial Day Service at the Capitol. A special Memorial Day presentation will be held at 10:00 a.m. in the Senate’s chambers. Space is limited so please R.S.V.P to Sen. Valde Garcia’s office at 1-800-516-0026 at your earliest convenience.

♦ May 26: Royal Oak and Madison Heights Memorial Day Parades

Join Sen. Pappageorge and his supporters for one or both Memorial Day Parades. Royal Oak’s begins at 9 a.m. at Main Street and 3rd Street, continuing north on Main Street to Oakview Cemetary. Madison Heights’ parade begins at 10:00 a.m. at 12 Mile and John R., continuing north to 13 Mile and ending at City Hall. For all local parade information, click [here](#).

Free Fishing Weekend

To celebrate the great Michigan outdoors and encourage outdoor recreation, Michigan offers two Free Fishing Weekends each year. The summer weekend is June 7-8, 2008 and the winter weekend is February 14-15, 2009. All fishing license fees will be waived for residents and visitors during these two special weekends. Click [here](#) or contact the DNR at 248-359-9040 for more information.



Questions or Comments?

If you have any questions or comments regarding information in this newsletter, or wish to be removed from or added to the mailing list, please contact my office at the following information:

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